

**Community Preservation Act Committee (CPAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, March 17, 2011**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by Peter Jessop, Chair, in the Town Room at Town Hall.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Sandra Anderson, John Gerber, Peter Jessop, Chair; Ellen Kosmer, Vince O'Connor, Vice Chair; Mary Streeter, Clerk; Stan Ziomek

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:** Gai Carpenter, Michael Jacques,

**STAFF / OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Sonia Aldrich, Nate Malloy, David Ziomek (arr. 9:10pm), Pat Holland, Jim Wald, Melissa Perot, Fran VanTreese, others

**AGENDA**

- Public Hearing Open 7 – 8 PM
- Financial Update
- Discussion of projects
- Approve any Minutes from last meeting

**Public Hearing**

Mary reported that over a dozen members of the public attended the CPA meeting on March 3, 2011 but the Public Hearing could not be held because there was no quorum of CPA members.

**Fran VanTreese** from the Public Transportation and Bicycle Committee spoke in support of the proposed Multi-Use Bike Path Feasibility Study. Stan asked whether the owners of the apartment complexes have agreed to the use of part of their property. Fran said this would be determined as part of the study. Mary asked whether some parts of the study could be eliminated to save money. Fran said she'd like to go ahead with this proposal and there is the possibility that it may come in under budget. She said the timing is right for this project because the University is currently working on a master plan and a transportation plan. Sandy asked whether this study could be done next year. Fran said deferring this might cause the University to devote its resources to other projects. Vince asked about Town or University staff time for this project. Fran said both the Town and the University would independently contract with the engineering firm, VHB, for services. Vince asked about the timeline for the project. Fran said she expects it to be completed within a year. The Department of Public Works will oversee the Town's portion of the project. Vince suggested that facilities to accommodate bicycle parking should be part of the process.

**Melissa Perot** commented that this is a splendid plan and the path will be used more for transportation than recreation.

**Pat Holland** spoke in support of the library proposals. Mary asked whether the North Amherst Library insulation project was on the JCPC plan for this year. Pat said it was not. Jim Wald said he expects it would be on the FY2013 plan. Peter wondered whether the insulation would qualify as historic preservation. The insulation would go under the roof and in the walls of the basement. Some people believe the extreme fluctuations of temperature may have an effect on moisture levels, which may affect materials. Vince and Stan asked about safety issues related to the chimneys on Jones Library. Pat responded with specifics about this concern and said that they have been told the situation is serious. The Trustees have only recently been made aware of the problem. The staging is expensive so it makes sense to do this work all at once rather than in stages. John asked Jim Wald to clarify the Historic Commission's lack of support for this project. Jim said the proposal came in late, for a large amount, wasn't on their priority plan because there was not a solid long range plan from the library, and they felt this could be handled through the Town's Capital budget.

As no one else wished to speak, a motion was made to close the Public Hearing at 7:36 pm with the understanding that, if anyone arrived later in the evening they would be given an opportunity to be heard. The regular meeting then began.

### **Discussion**

Peter explained the financial spreadsheet. There are proposals totaling \$877,952 under consideration and \$966,387 is potentially available to fund projects. Sandra asked whether CPAC spends all the funds each year or whether an amount is put into reserves for future recommendations. She wanted to go on the record suggesting an amount such as 25%, or whatever percent the State allots as a match, be put in reserves each year. Mary agreed that this amount or more be put in reserves in case worthy and expensive projects such as the Cole property become ready for funding. Vince said we are investing in the Town for the future, but preferred not to have an *a priori* approach, and predicted we would have some funds still available after voting. Stan reminded that if Town Meeting does not vote to fund a project, that money reverts back to the CPA for future recommendations. This has happened a few times in the past.

Vince withdrew his proposal for Facilitating Restoration of Hawthorne House for \$81,000.

Peter asked if anyone had concerns about any of the projects that would warrant further discussion. Vince expressed reservations about the Hawthorne House Study in terms of its purpose. He preferred that the study be directed toward preservation of the house rather than demolition. Peter felt that this would limit the study and that would not be appropriate. Mary had a general reservation about funding studies, preferring funds be used for actual preservation. She commented that Amherst has a reputation for having too many studies. Ellen felt the study for the Hawthorne House was important and Sandy commented that it was only for \$20,000.

Stan moved, Sandy seconded to recommend **\$20,000** for the study for the **Hawthorne House. Voted 6-0-1.** Vince abstained.

Mary moved, Stan seconded to recommend **\$40,000** for the construction of a home on Belchertown Road by **Habitat for Humanity. Voted 7-0.**

Stan moved, John seconded to recommend **\$50,000** for a **Feasibility Study for a Multi-use Bike Path Connecting UMass with North Amherst. Voted 6-0-1.** Mary abstained.

A discussion ensued about how the Hawthorne property debt service allocated between the categorizes of Affordable Housing, Open Space, and Recreation as required by the State. It was suggested that we recommend the amount and leave the discussion on the categorization percentages until the next meeting. Vince moved, Stan seconded to recommend **\$65,008** for **Hawthorne Property Debt Service. Voted 7-0.**

Stan moved, Sandy seconded to recommend **\$35,244** for **Plum Brook Recreational Fields Debt Service** (year 7 of 10). **Voted 5-0-2.** Vince and Mary abstained.

Stan moved, Sandy seconded to recommend **\$20,000** for **Affordable Housing Appraisals and Surveys. Voted 7-0.**

A discussion about the appropriateness and legality of the proposal to hire a person to oversee historic projects ensued. Vince was concerned about the legality of funding this position and did not think it is in keeping with the spirit of the CPA law. He suggested that the job description and Town Counsel's opinion be presented to the Mass. Department of Revenue to see whether they would be willing to fund this. Mary was concerned that this is supplanting because we have previously had Town Planning staff do this type of work. She called the CPA Coalition to check on this and was told that some towns do fund an assistant to the CPA committee to carry out the work of the committee.

Mary didn't feel the case Town Counsel cited actually supported Town Counsel's opinion. Ellen did not support this proposal because it came in very late and too many historic preservation projects have been funded. Peter said he is sympathetic to the concerns Ellen and Vince expressed, while at the same time supportive of Town staff. He is inclined to let Town Meeting make the decision. John would like to support Town staff, who requested this help. Peter suggested that a minority report be written.

Sandy moved, Stan seconded to recommend **\$20,000 for a Temporary Part-Time Position to Oversee and Complete 8 or more Historical Preservation Projects. Voted 4-3.** Ellen, Vince, and Mary voted no.

Stan moved, no one seconded to recommend **\$50,000 for West Cemetery Ironwork Fencing. No action was taken.**

Mary moved, Vince seconded to recommend **\$10,000 for Archival Material Conservation & Restoration: Town Clerk - Special Collections (year 5 of 5). Voted 7-0.**

At first Peter considered voting down the funds for the Historical Society proposal without prejudice because the committee wished to learn more about what fundraising efforts were being done by the Society. Due to time constraints in the schedule of events leading to Town Meeting, after discussion, it was decided to go ahead and vote. John is supportive of this because it is run by a volunteer group that needs professional help. Vince said this is a very important property to be preserved due to its visibility in the center of town.

The Stan moved, Peter seconded to recommend **\$35,000 for Amherst Historical Society Structural and Feasibility Study. Voted 6-0-1.** Mary abstained.

Nate noted that the building itself is a historically significant structure and advised thinking of that as separate from its current use. He said that the church has applied for a competitive grant through the Mass. Historical Commission as well as other grants. Vince said using CPA funds to leverage other funds is something CPAC continues to encourage. Ellen said that their presentation was particularly well done.

Mary moved, John seconded to recommend **\$45,000 for Hope Church Roof Rehabilitation Foundation and Drainage Work. Voted 7-0.**

Due to recent weather conditions the carriage house has been destroyed. Repairs are needed to stabilize the bars. John said he is on the NACF board and would abstain to avoid the appearance of any conflict of interest.

Ellen moved, Sandy seconded to recommend **\$15,000 for NACF Emergency Repairs to the Barn. Voted 6-0-1.** John abstained.

Peter said he assumes this study would include a serious exploration of alternative funding sources. Stan moved, Ellen seconded to recommend **\$10,000 for NACF Structural Evaluation and Feasibility Study. Voted 5-0-2.** John and Mary abstained.

John moved, Vince seconded to recommend **\$15,000 for Jones Library Conservation of Historic Paintings. Voted 7-0.**

Vince moved, John seconded to recommend **\$10,000 for North Amherst Library Foundation Restoration. Voted 7-0.**

Some committee members expressed reservations that the insulation work was not truly historic preservation as required by the Community Preservation Act, although everyone thought it was a good idea. Mary moved, no one seconded to recommend **\$10,000 for North Amherst Library Insulation. No action was taken.**

Ellen moved, Mary seconded to recommend **\$113,000** for **Jones Library Chimney Restoration**. **Voted 7-0.**

Vince moved, John seconded to recommend **\$25,600** for **Kimball House Historic Preservation 575 North East Street** (year 5 of 5). **Voted 7-0.**

Stan moved, Sandy seconded to recommend **\$28,350,000** for **Town Hall Masonry Repairs Debt Service** (year 2 of 10). **Voted 6-0-1.** Vince abstained.

Stan moved, Ellen seconded to recommend **\$150,000** for **Conservation of 26 acres of Open Space on the Stosz property on Market Hill Road**. **Voted 7-0.**

Vince moved, Sandy seconded to recommend **\$1,500** for **Administrative Expenses**. **Voted 7-0.**

Sandy moved, Stan seconded to recommend **\$200,000** for **Undesignated Reserves**. **Voted 7-0.**

### **Discussion of Hawthorne Property**

Dave Ziomek explained that each part of the land must have either a recreation restriction, an affordable housing restriction, or an open space restriction on it. Vince asked Dave Ziomek to return to us with suggestions for the percentages for restrictions on each part of the land. Dave had expected that this could be done in the Fall, however he will work with Sonia to learn the bonding requirements related to the restrictions.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Stan, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Vince to adjourn at 9:23pm. Voted unanimously.

### **NEXT MEETINGS**

Our next meetings will be **Thursday, April 21, 2011 at 7:01 pm** to finalize report to Town Meeting and possibly April 28 and May 18 (Wed.) and 26.

### **HOMEWORK**

Sonia will email a draft report. Committee members will send her any suggestions.

### **DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED**

- CPAC Agenda, 3/3/2011, 1 page
- FY2010 CPA Proposals at a Glance, revised 3/3/2011, 1 page
- Spreadsheet "CPAC FY2012 Proposals to be Considered for Recommendation to Town Meeting", 3/17/2011, 1 page
- Emails between Sonia Aldrich 2/18/11 and 2/22/11 and Shirin Everett, Town Counsel 2/18/11, "CPA Question" and attached letter from Kathleen Colleary, Bureau of Municipal Finance Law to Jennifer Dopazo, Brookline Town Counsel, 10/23/06, 4 pages total
- Letter from Patrick D. Kamins to Guilford Mooring, 2/14/11, 1 page
- Feasibility Study for a Shared-Use Path figures, 2/18/11, 1 page
- Email from Nate Malloy with Town Clerk Archival Material List and North Amherst Community Farm letter and photos, 3/17/11,

Respectfully submitted by Mary Streeter, Clerk  
Approved April 7, 2011